

SAF/LLZ (Legislative Research Team)

FORD, Harold E. , Jr. (Democrat)
Representative 9th District, Tennessee
Elected 1996 to the 105th Congress
Reelected to succeeding Congresses



BACKGROUND

Born: Memphis, Tennessee -- 11 May 1970

Home: Memphis, Tennessee

Marital status: Single

Religion: Baptist

Education: University of Pennsylvania, B.A., 1992; University of Michigan, J.D., 1996

Military: None

Profession: Consultant law clerk

Political: Special Asst to Ron Brown at the Economic Development Administration, special asst with Clinton transition team; worked for Sen Jim Sasser (D-TN) as an asst to the Senate Budget Committee on banking matters. No previous elected office. Defeated Rod DeBerry (R) with 61% of the vote for the open seat of his father, Rep Harold E. Ford (D), who retired. Ran unopposed in 2000 and was reelected in 2002 with 84% of the vote.

Rep Ford, a "moderate centrist," threw his hat in the ring one month before finishing law school at the University of Michigan. He campaigned on a "New Vision" platform, using the name of the African-American newspaper, "The Vision," which he founded at the University of Pennsylvania (Legi-Slate, Nov96). He wants computers in schools, supports the Head Start program and youth summer jobs programs, college tuition tax credits, and increased responsibility for the Dept of Education. Supports empowerment zones and tax incentives to revitalize the economic base of urban areas. Also wants to preserve environmentally sensitive areas like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and to put more cops on the street.

In the 105th Congress, appointed to the Government Reform Committee on 17Apr97.

In the 106th Congress, said he didn't know if the anthrax vaccine posed any health risks, but he did know that highly trained members of the armed services were expressing grave concerns about it. Cosponsored a bill to make the anthrax shots voluntary.

In the 107th Congress, co-sponsored 'concurrent receipt' resolution and a resolution calling for the restoration of health care coverage for retired members of the uniformed services. Responsive to an announcement that the Air Force was stationing eight C5B heavy-cargo planes at the Air National Guard's 164th Air Wing (Memphis IAP), Rep Ford stated, "the decision to replace the aging C141s means the 164th, which has played a key role in most major conflicts during the past two decades, can continue its airlift mission for years to come. In today's threat environment, it is essential we give our military the tools they need to support our troops." Participated in a nine-member House delegation that met with leaders in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, and Kyrgyzstan, as well as visits with US troops in the region. "What I saw has expanded my appreciation and respect for the US military." Rep Ford further indicated he is inclined to support a permanent US military presence somewhere in the region. At the end of the 107th Congress, staged a brief, unsuccessful challenge to Rep Nancy Pelosi for the House Minority Leader position.

Additional: Coordinated his father's last two election campaigns. Joined the Blue Dog Coalition in July 1999, only the second African-American to do so. At age 26, became the youngest person in 200 years to be elected to Congress. Is considering a run for the Senate.

AF Bases: Memphis IAP (ANG)

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